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ABSTRACT

This issue of the Goldfinch focuses on communities. Ethnic groups, religious groups, schools, families, even the Internet, are used as examples of communities in Iowa. Forced communities are exemplified by migration, law, natural disasters, and sometimes education. Photographs from Iowa's past show the changing nature of communities and encourage students to examine issues related to the time periods. Students are encouraged to research their own community's past and explore implications for the future. Other activities feature a comic and a short story. (EH)

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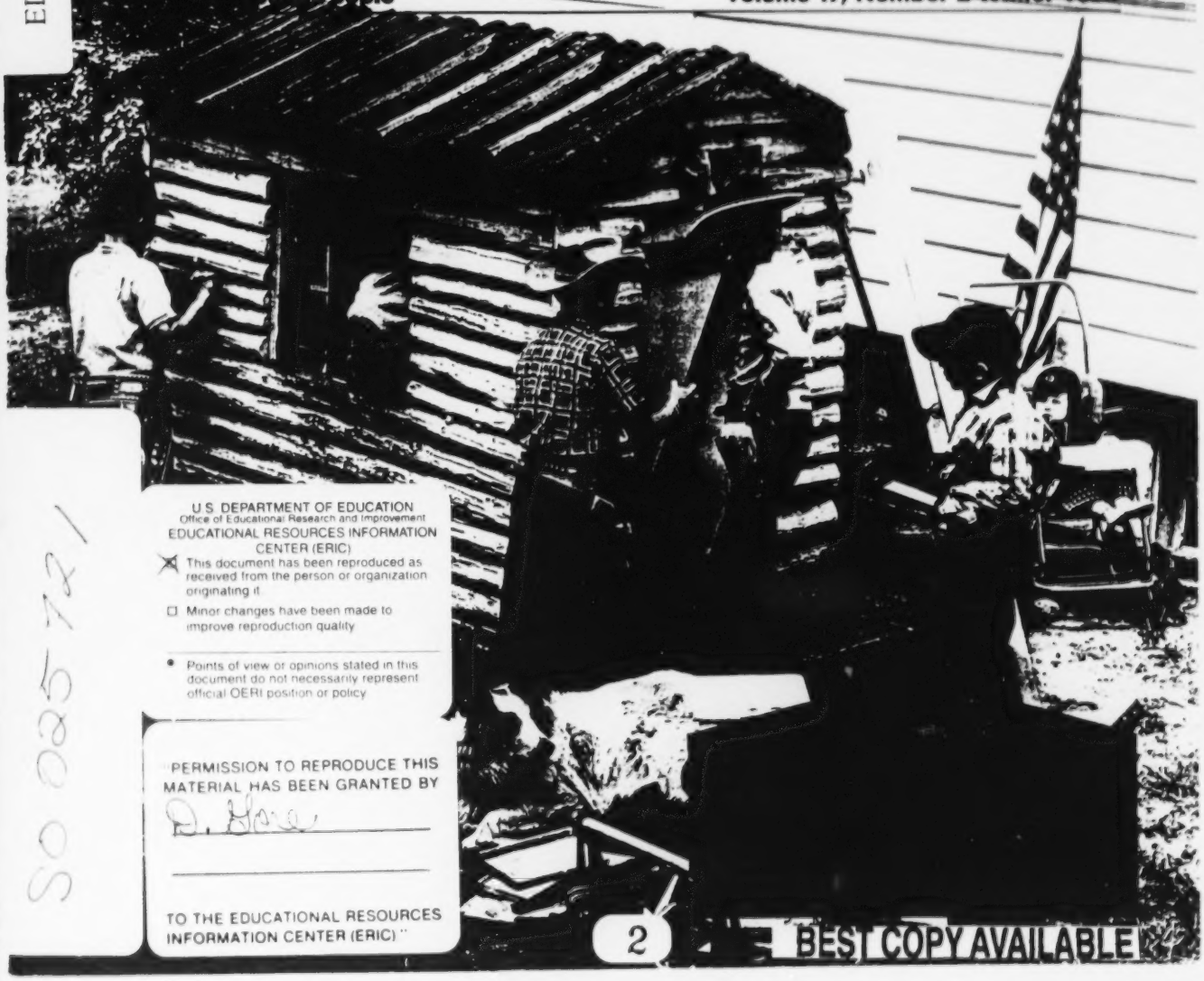
...ung People

Volume 17, Number 2 Winter 1995



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Wild Rosie's Map

Iowans across the state have been connected by the many communities in their lives — ethnic groups, schools, families, and even the Internet! Help Wild Rosie explore some of these communities in this issue of *The Goldfinch*. You can start by counting the communities on the map below and comparing them to the communities in your life.

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Winner of a 1995 Parents' Choice Honor Award

THE Goldfinch

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Winter 1995

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On the cover

What goes into a community? Plenty! Including a lot of hard work, shared experiences, and people! Kids in the Evans family are working with their friends in the 1950s to construct a community of their own. Read all about building and maintaining communities in this issue of *The Goldfinch*! (Credit: SHSI/Joan Liffring-Zug Collection)

Immigrant community

Visit a Czech community in Iowa and learn how traditions and customs are preserved. See page 18.

Give it your best shot

Be a photo historian by spotting the communities in this photograph. See page 23.

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What is a community?

A community is a group of people who feel a sense of belonging, share common beliefs, interests, or experiences, and work together toward a shared purpose.

The kids in the photograph to the right, for example, are working together to build a clubhouse in the 1950s. They also have a lot more in common — they're kids, they probably live in the same neighborhood, and they are all about the same age.

People, people, people

All communities depend on one thing: people. People make communities grow and prosper. People pass on community ideas and beliefs.

Geographical communities need people to make them succeed. Without people there would be no reason for schools, businesses, and homes. And without these things, there would be no physical community.

Communities of faith, ideas, and beliefs (like Jewish Iowans) need people to keep the community beliefs alive. Ethnic communities need people to continue languages, crafts, and other traditions.

You're stepping on my community!

Communities often overlap and communities exist within communities. Farm kids in Iowa, for example, are part of the larger community of farm kids across the nation.

It's also common for people to belong to many communities at once. If you were to count all the communities in your life, you'd run out of fingers and toes. Everything you are, do, think, feel, and believe makes you part of a community, from your hobbies to where you live.

Community tour

In this issue of *The Goldfinch*, we'll explore some communities in Iowa history. You'll learn how they began and how they changed as technology and new beliefs, ideas, and attitudes developed.

As you read about Iowa communities, think about your life today. What would it be like without communities? How do you think your communities have changed throughout Iowa history? ❖

SHSI (Iowa City)

These kids are building a community of their own. What kinds of communities have you made for yourself in your life?

Making a community a home

by Bridgett M. Williams

People form communities in all sorts of locations. Whether you live in a small village, a rural town, or a large city, connections to familiar places and people make you feel at home. It's hard work to make strong connections in new places, though. When Iowa families move, they have always had to work together to build communities.

When European Americans came to Iowa, first to explore and trade and later to settle, they had to share the land with the Native Americans already here.

Fur Trading Villages

Caroline Phelps was only 15 when she moved to the banks of the Des Moines River in 1830. She and her husband, William, came to trade for furs with a village of Sac and Fox Indians.

Caroline and William were surprised to find that the Sac and Fox traveled a lot but always came back to their village. In the spring, Native American families gathered to plant corn and other crops. Most of the village then went visiting, trading, or hunting. They would come together again in mid-summer for a big dance and village council meeting. In the fall, a band of hunters left the village to get meat for the winter. Most of the women and children stayed behind to harvest and store food.

Frontier life was hard for Caroline at first. She had to learn how to fit in with her Native-American neighbors. She learned their language, attended dances, and even threw a 4th of July party. She and the other mothers would work together while their kids played. She helped William run the store and became a good trader.

Just when Caroline felt at home, the federal government forced the Sac and Fox to leave their Iowa territories. Without customers, Caroline and William could not stay in business. She and William had to leave, too. Their busy community vanished overnight.

Becoming Norwood

When the first European Americans settled in Otter Creek Township in Lucas County in the mid-1850s, there were no post offices, schools, or businesses. Making a town was a family affair.

Relatives moved together from their homes in Missouri, Ohio, and Indiana and bought land next to each other so they could share tools and labor. For instance, Robert Crooks and Moses Curtis had married sisters, Elizabeth and Mary Spence, before they left Ohio. Together, the two couples and their 20 children farmed 320 acres.

When "Doc" Ashby moved to Otter Creek in 1860, he donated land for the Methodist Church so that he and his family could walk to church in the winter. Benway's blacksmith shop and William Miller's livery stable drew people to town daily. Finally, when the new post office opened in 1867, the families decided to rename the town Norwood.

Norwood's oldest male residents took turns serving on the township council and passed laws to keep their community respectable.

Norwood's residents proudly bragged about their high school, gymnasium, brass band, and Grange Hall. In the early 1900s, Norwood's summer singing school was so popular that people came from miles away to hear concerts.

Yet, time has changed Norwood. Automobiles made it easier to shop in larger towns and stores closed up. No one needed a blacksmith anymore. Young people moved away. Some families lost farms during the Great Depression in the 1930s or in the droughts of the 1980s.

Many have stayed on, however. Norwood's phonebook still lists Curtises, Crooks, Wallaces, and other long-time families who stay rooted in one of Iowa's most interesting rural communities.

SHSI (Iowa City)

Ottumwa during a 1920s community celebration

Ottumwa

Although it has many more citizens than a village or town, a city like Ottumwa still has things in common with smaller communities. Ottumwa's many churches, schools, and businesses provide the people who live there with a sense of belonging. Radio and television stations and the local newspaper provide residents with the latest information about their community. Indian Hills Community College offers continuing education programs and sponsors cultural events. Fifteen parks give kids places to play and picnic. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins also make Ottumwa a place where generations of Iowans have grown up. ❖

long with the pioneer families who streamed westward to the rich lands of Iowa came the "town builders." They knew farm families would need a place to sell their grain and animals and a place to buy supplies — plows, kerosene, nails, sugar, and coffee. They also would need help shoeing horses and repairing farm machinery. So, just as soon as an area in Iowa was settled, a town grew up too.

Some towns lasted only a few years while others grew into busy places with brick roads and bustling main streets. Still others, like Norwood, stayed small but continued to meet the needs of residents with schools, churches, stores, and community events.

Learn more about the town and residents of Norwood. Study the above map and then answer the following questions. Answers on page 30.

1. How many schools, cemeteries, and churches can you spot?
2. What school do you think the Curtis and Crook kids attended? Why?
3. Who do you think attended Center School?
4. Which families lived farthest from the Norwood Store?
5. Why do you think "Big Rock" was important?
6. Name two reasons why fewer families lived in the northeast corner of the township.
7. Why are there only men's names on this map?
8. If you were moving to Norwood in the mid-1800s, where would you buy land and build a home? Why?

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Communi

Community News

by Michelle Rubin

A local newspaper is like a community diary where events, local news, and community accomplishments are recorded. Newspapers often contain information about other communities, too, such as schools and churches, and help document their activities.

Newspaper articles are only one way to pass along community news. Other communities, like clubs and political organizations, also communicate through newsletters, magazines, and brochures to inform existing members and recruit new ones.

The following newspaper articles contain news from different communities in Iowa history. What do these articles tell us about the communities?

Physical Culture is close to the heart

Des Moines Register, **January 19, 1947**

Cedar Rapids, Iowa — No other national group has been able to come to America, keep its distinct identity in the American scene, and yet be so thoroughly a part of community life with greater success than Czechs.

At home, the little child speaks **Bohemian** (Bow-HE-me-en) just as fluently as the distant cousin in **Prague** (Praw-G). At the Saturday school for Czechoslovakian (Check-es-low-VAH-key-n) children in Cedar Rapids, they learn the songs and the history of their homeland.

Ask Yourself

1. Why did kids in this community go to school on Saturdays?
2. Why was it important for Czech kids to speak Bohemian?

Bohemian — Czech language
Prague — Czech city

Why many of our customs will never disappear

Tama News-Herald, **April 23, 1953**

Tama, Iowa — The people who say that we Mesquakies are bound to lose our customs forget something. The Indian did not decide to come to America — American ways came to them.

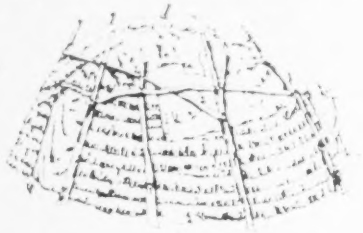
Before the Europeans ever left the old country they had decided to make the break with the old ways and to seek something that was new and, hopefully, better.

But the Mesquakies were not unhappy and they were not looking for anything new.

Of course, many of our people decide to leave the old ways altogether. They move to the cities and become just like any other American. But for every one who does this, two more are born to take their place in the Indian communities across the land. So the ways do not die out.

Ask Yourself

1. According to this article, how is the Native American community different from European-American communities?
2. Why does this writer think Native American ways will never die out?



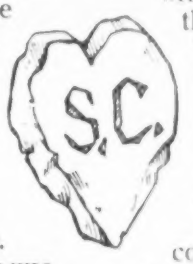
'y News

Town with heart of stone refuses to die

Des Moines Register,
Dec. 6, 1964

Stone City, Iowa — Stone City probably could be titled the place that refuses to die.

Stone City snuggles on the banks of the scenic, tree-bordered Wapsipinicon (WAP-see-pin-e-con) River, four miles west of Anamosa. Limestone bluffs dominate the scene.



Stone from there was hauled by oxen for use by the army more than 100 years ago. In 1852, stone was hauled to Mount Vernon to be used for Cornell College buildings.

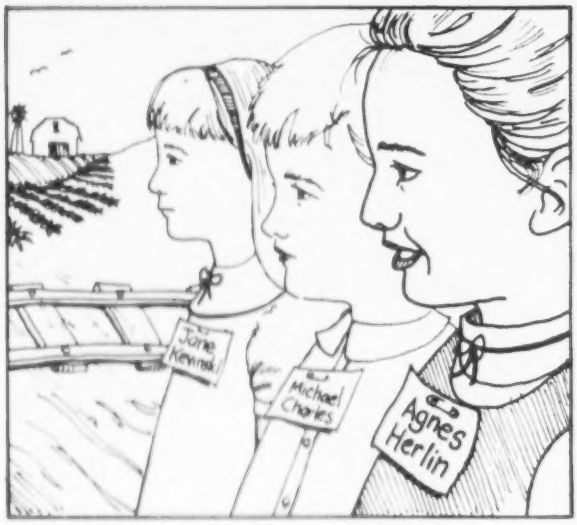
By 1896, a thousand men were working in the quarries. Then came Portland cement. Cheaper and more flexible than limestone, it took over most of Stone City's markets. By 1900, Stone City had become a ghost town.

The community came back as an artists' and writers' colony in the early 1930s. The late artist Grant Wood was on the faculty of the Stone City Colony and Art School.

Today, the community has 24 families, with about 112 residents.

Ask yourself

1. What made the Stone City community fade away?
2. Can a community with only 24 families still be a community? Why or why not?



Iowa's Orphan Trains

Des Moines Register,
June 18, 1989

Buffalo Center, Iowa— When she was 5 years old, Agnes Herlin rode a train from Brooklyn, New York, to Forest City, Iowa.

There, she and a dozen children, their names pinned on their coats and dresses, walked single file from the train depot to the Methodist Church.

There, adults looked them over and chose the one they wanted. Two families wanted Agnes. She went to the home of an elderly couple.

From 1854 to 1929, trains brought thousands of orphans and abandoned children from the East Coast to rural areas in Iowa and other states. Anybody who wanted a new son or daughter could have one.

At least 150,000 and perhaps as many as 250,000 children rode the rails to new homes, some separated forever from brothers and sisters.

Ask Yourself

1. What united the members of this community?
2. Why did this community exist?

Communities of interest

Sharing something in common means you are part of a community!

by Linzee Kull McCray

If you have a hobby, belong to a club, or participate in after-school activities, you are a part of a community of interest. This community is made up of people who share goals, experiences, jobs, hobbies, or other common interests.

Elspeth Close was a teenager living in Iowa City in 1918 and a member of many communities of interest. She shared some interests with her friends, like shopping, going to movies, and having sleep-overs. At home, Elspeth loved to read, write in her diary, and bake. Although she did these things alone, they made her part of communities of interest, too.

Community members may share their interests at meetings, informal gatherings, or in newsletters, but some community members may never meet at all.

Elspeth Close was an Iowa City girl who belonged to many communities of interest in the early 1900s.

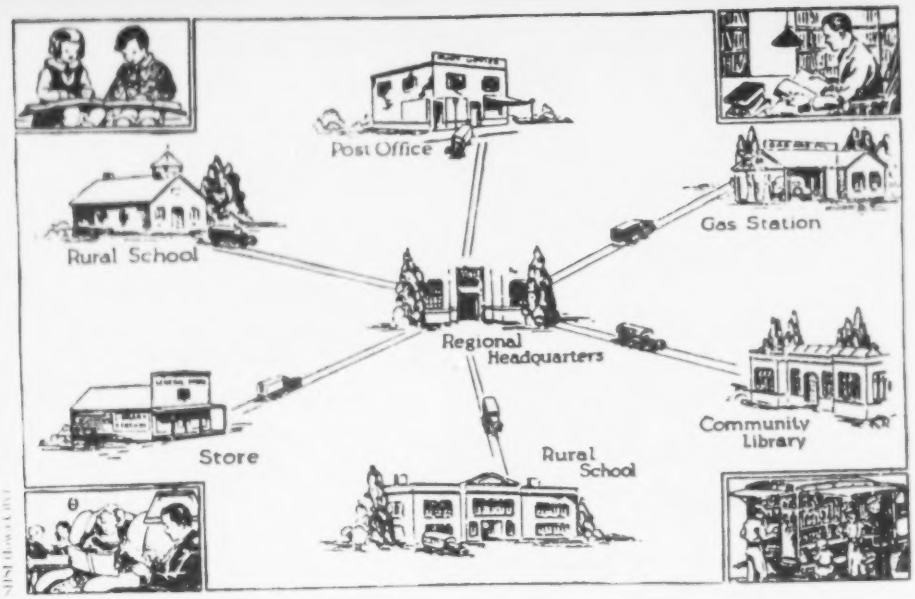
Community of readers

If you like to snuggle down with a good book, you are part of a large community of Iowans — the community of readers. Iowa ranks number eight in the nation when it comes to checking out library books.

With so much to read, from school textbooks to the back of your cereal box, it is hard to imagine a time when books were scarce. But even into the 20th century, however, many Iowa families had only the Bible and a few books in their homes.

Iowa's early citizens knew the importance of libraries, but few Iowa towns could afford them. To make books available to more people, Iowa's General Assembly established a traveling library system in 1896. Originally, the state library in Des Moines shipped boxes of 50 books to groups willing to pay the postage. These packages included fiction, books on farming and homemaking, and children's books.

Bookmobiles — big motor homes with shelves — still take books to people who live far from public libraries. Today, five bookmobiles travel throughout Iowa, reaching the community of readers that stretches across the state.



This illustration appeared in a booklet from the early 1900s advertising the benefits of a traveling library system. The drawing shows how a traveling library connects the community of readers in Iowa. Name some of the other communities you see in the illustration.

Iowa's farming community

Although separated by acres of fields and woods, farmers and their families are a community based on their shared interest in the land. Many early European-American settlers came to Iowa in the 1800s for rich farmland. Farm families worked hard to survive, and farm children had many chores. They fed animals, helped in the fields and house, and often had only their brothers and sisters to play with when the work was done.

The isolation made it difficult to get together and share farming experiences. County and state fairs began as places for farmers to gather for education as well as fun.

In 1869, a college was established in Ames offering instruction in the latest developments in agriculture. Women attended the same school to study home economics. Today, that college is Iowa State University.

In the early 1900s, the extension service, an organization that taught rural families how to use new ideas on their farms and in their homes, began to hold classes and farm demonstrations. The service is still offered.

Today, the community of farmers is not as isolated as it was 100 years ago. Telephones and improved roads allow farm families to get together more easily and more often. Information is available in newspapers, on television, and on the Internet. Farm children go to school in town and can get together with their friends. Although they still live miles apart, members of the farming community are closer today than they were 100 years ago. ❖

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Kid Communities

Taking care of kids in Iowa history

by Millie K. Frese

Throughout the state's history, Iowans have joined forces in special communities to meet the needs of children. Some kid-centered communities have been around for more than a century. Others change or disappear as kids' needs change.

Courtesy Iowa School for the Deaf

Ray Glann (left) and Matthew Peters, students at the Iowa School for the Deaf in Council Bluffs, particpate in Art Festival '95.

Iowa Braille School

The Iowa Braille School (IBS) in Vinton has served students who are partially or completely visually impaired since 1852. The school teaches kids how to live in a world geared toward those who can see.

One of the school's more famous students was Mary Ingalls, sister of author Laura Ingalls Wilder. Mary, who was 14 when she lost her vision, attended the school between 1881 and 1889.

She and other students studied music, history, math, chemistry, and industrial subjects such as sewing and beadwork.

The students lived in dormitories, two to a bed. In the 1920s, a Children's Cottage was added. Kid-size furniture, drinking fountains, and bathroom facilities were built for very young children.

Students at IBS helped run their community. Some worked in the kitchen and garden while others cared for the youngest students. The students also raised much of the food they ate.

This year, IBS serves 400 students. Fifty to 60 attend classes on campus. They live in dormitories but go home weekends and holidays. The rest are served by IBS while attending schools in their own communities.

Besides academic subjects, IBS students learn to travel safely, read and write **Braille**, and use special technology. They also learn how to do things sighted kids take for granted, such as using a phone, ordering from a menu, and packing a lunch.

"Sometimes, in public school (students who are blind) become **ostracized**," said Diane Utsinger, who works at IBS. "Here that doesn't happen. Everyone has a chance to shine."

Braille — system of writing blind people can read

ostracized — left out

Iowa School for the Deaf

In 1855, a state-run school for hearing-impaired kids was operating in Iowa City. Kids came from around the state to live and learn in a setting designed to

destitute — poor

SHSI (Iowa City)

Military company of boys at the Iowa Soldiers' Orphans' Home, Davenport, 1870s.

meet their special needs. In 1870, the school moved to its present location in Council Bluffs.

In the beginning, students were instructed in mostly industrial subjects. The school was equipped with a shoe shop, a bakery, a carpenter shop, and a printing shop. According to a pamphlet published by the school in 1910, students were expected to "acquire trades and pursuits in life whereby they may become independent wage-earners."

Today, the school emphasizes academic subjects — just like most schools across the state — and serves Iowa students until the age of 21. More than 90 students study and live in this community, while 40 more students attend classes during the day and go home in the evenings.

Annie Wittenmyer Home

Annie Turner Wittenmyer lived in Keokuk at the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861. Wittenmyer soon realized that orphaned children were often overlooked victims of war. In 1864, a year before the Civil War ended, Wittenmyer helped open a home in Farmington for kids left orphaned or **destitute**. The following year, the home was moved to Davenport and called the Iowa Soldiers' Orphans' Home. Soon, similar homes opened in Cedar Falls and Glenwood. In 1876, all the homes were closed and the orphans moved to the Davenport home.

SHSI (Iowa City)

This girl lived in the Iowa Soldiers' Orphans' Home in the 1870s.

Residents lived in cottages. They went to school and worked on the home's farm or the other industries within its community.

Over the years, needs of the residents changed. Fewer kids were orphaned by soldiers, while more required specialized education, treatment, and care. The Wittenmyer Youth Center now cares for adolescents with behavioral disorders and houses other kid communities, like Head Start and Junior Theater.

Today, kids without parents may live with other relatives or with foster families. These and other kid-centered communities offer kids a place to belong. ❖

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Forced Communities

by Tina Goepfert Roth

While most Iowans choose where to live, work, and play, some participate in involuntary communities where they have little or no choice about being a member.

"Usually these are special populations who are brought together by a single shared condition or special circumstances," explained Rick Knupfer of the Iowa Humanities Board.

Migration, law, natural disasters, and even education have drawn Iowans together (and kept them apart) throughout the state's history.

Sharing spaces

When European-American settlers arrived in Iowa in the 1830s, they had to share space with the Native Americans already here. European Americans soon claimed the land as their own. The U.S. government forced Native Americans to leave and later only allowed a few to return and purchase their original village lands.

Learning the rules

When people are caught breaking laws, they are often sent to prisons or reform schools. Members of these communities are restricted in where they go and what they do.

Glenwood, the first reform school in Iowa, was built for boys in Lee County in 1868. By 1869, Iowa also had a girls' reform school. Kids ages 5 to 18 lived in these reform communities for a variety of reasons. Some misbehaved, others were homeless, and a few were criminals. Like other kids, reform school children attended school, worked, and learned trades, but they could not leave the tight boundaries of their communities.

Going to school

You are already familiar with the biggest involuntary community in your town — your school! Every child in the state, ages 6 to 16, is required by law to attend school. This wasn't always the case. During the early days of our state, going to school was **optional**. In 1902 and 1919, the Iowa Legislature passed laws making school **compulsory**.

Facing the flood

During the flood of 1993, hundreds of Iowans were forced to leave their homes to escape the rising water. Involuntary communities were formed when flood victims found temporary shelter in churches and school gymnasiums. Did the flood create new communities in your town?

Other factors also have shaped involuntary communities. Throughout history, people have been forced into communities based on age, gender, or race. What are some of the involuntary communities in your life? ❖

SHSI (Iowa City)

Sometimes people have little choice about living together. This was the case when European-American and Native-American communities came into contact in the 1830s.

optional — by choice

compulsory — required

Make A BOOSTER Brochure

When people are down in the dumps, it's common to say that they just need a little boost to get them smiling again. It's the same with communities! Give your community a boost. Here's how!

To boost means to spread the word about how great something is. Towns in Iowa started booster clubs in the late 1800s to attract new residents and businesses. Booster clubs planned parades, festivals, and other ways to spread the news about their communities.

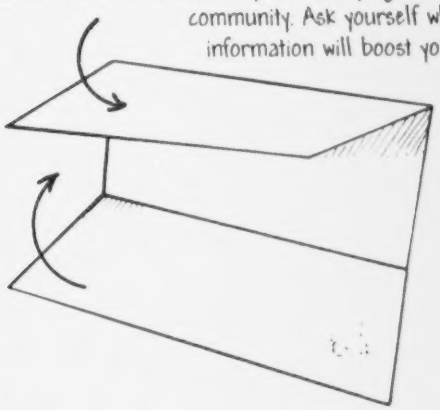
Today, the communities you belong to need YOU to help continue their important work.

Continue the tradition of boosterism with a booster brochure you design and distribute yourself. You can boost your town or neighborhood, a club, or a group of people who share similar beliefs and ideas.

IOWA
THE Goldfinch
COMMUNITY!
We are made up of subscribers who love to read each issue! I'm proud to be a member of the super-cool Goldfinch community!
Join Today

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: Fold a blank piece of paper in thirds. Plan your brochure. Decide who you are trying to attract to your community. Ask yourself what kind of information will boost your community.



Step 2: Use the six panels on your brochure to organize your information. Include written information and illustrations. Dress up your brochure with glitter, stickers, and other fun stuff.

Step 3: Give copies of your booster brochure to friends, family members, and teachers. Invite them to join your community, too!

Illustration by Mary Moye-Rowley

Believing in community: The Icarians

by Amy Ruth

Icarians were people bound together by common beliefs. Originally from France, Icarians followed the teachings of Etienne Cabet, who envisioned a perfect place and called it Icaria. This name came from a Greek myth. Icarians believed people were equal and should share prosperity. This is also called communism.

The Icarians immigrated to the United States in the mid-1850s. Some settled in Adams County in southwestern Iowa where they built homes and planted crops. The land, livestock, crops, and buildings were owned by the whole community. Everyone did their fair share, including children. Some kids helped plant fruits and vegetables and gathered wild nuts. Others carried meals to the men working in the mill or helped in the kitchen and laundry area.

Icarian children understood the community's principles at a young age. Marie Marchand, the first Icarian child born in Adams County, wrote about a new community member in her memoir: "She had many dolls, dishes, and picture books . . . and offered to divide her pretty toys, showing already that she was a true Icarian."

The beliefs that once held the Icarians together eventually divided them. Younger Icarians believed older members weren't sticking to the original ideals of the founder. The two groups divided the property and went separate ways.

By 1895, Iowa's Icarian communities had disbanded. The Icarians pictured below were among the last in Adams County.

Today, descendants keep the community's ideas alive through newsletters, celebrations, and heritage societies.

News from Icaria

The following paragraphs were taken from the French-language newspaper published in Adams County by Marie Marchand while she was a teenager. The passages describe the Icarian community as it was in 1885. Match the paragraphs with scenes on the map. (Hint: Each paragraph may describe more than one scene!) Turn to page 30 for the answers.

___ The oldest keep themselves busy, some making wood for the kitchen, others are entrusted with the care of the horses, livestock, and pigs.

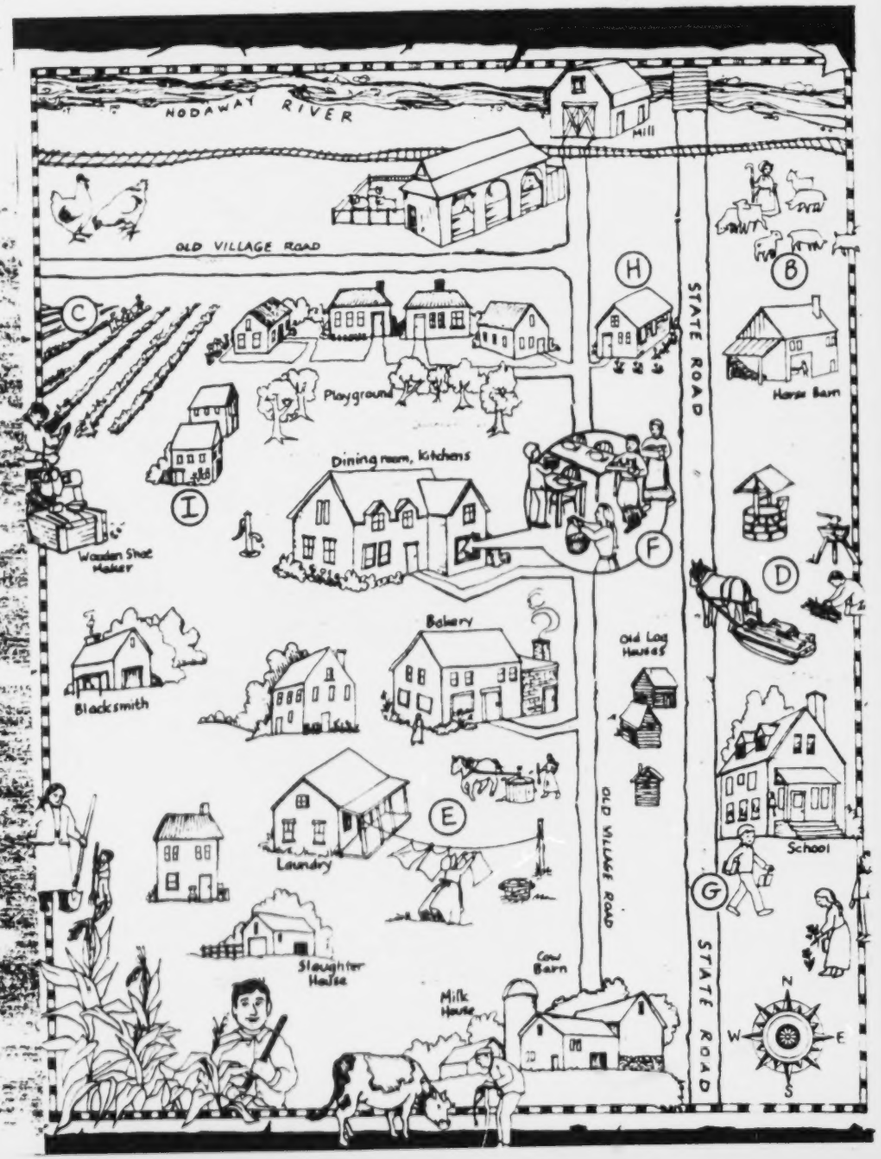
___ The youngest [adults] do the heaviest farming work and transport of the wood from the forest to the village during the winter.

___ The women and the young girls are entrusted with the making and the upkeep of the clothing of all the members, in addition to the washing.

___ Women and girls also prepare the vegetables for cooking, wash the dishes and set the table for all the meals.

___ The children go to school and the oldest help as much as they can either with the waiting on tables or the sewing etc.

___ Each family has a separate house, composed of four rooms. Every house is surrounded by a small garden where every family raises flowers.



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A Czech Community

Coming to Iowa . . . making it feel like home

By Sherri Dagel House

immigrants — people who travel to new countries to make homes

In 1854, seven-year-old Thomas Korab embarked on a 12-week adventure that began in Moravia, a country in eastern Europe, and ended in Linn County, Iowa. Thomas and his parents traveled thousands of miles across Europe and over the stormy Atlantic Ocean. Their exhausting journey ended at their new home — a farmstead near the town of Cedar Rapids. There they found a growing Czech community.

Making Iowa home

Like the Korab family, thousands of other **immigrants** came to the United States and Iowa, settling in the mid-to-late-1800s.

Czech immigrants built homes and businesses on the southeastern bank of the Cedar River, close to water, food, work sites, and transportation. Workers later constructed a bridge across the river and the community expanded to the southwest bank.

This Cedar Rapids neighborhood, later nicknamed "Czech Village," became a popular place to settle around the turn of the century. Although the newcomers dressed and spoke differently from other Iowans, they felt at home in the village among other Czechs.

The local Czech school helped kids like Thomas adapt to their new home. While learning to read and write English, kids also studied Czech history and culture.

Hanging on to heritage

Most immigrants carried few belongings to their new homes, but everyone brought their Czech heritage to the unique Iowa neighborhood. Czech language and art helped immigrants retain a part of their cultural heritage.

Cooking traditional foods was yet another way to keep traditions alive. Thomas and other Czech kids often enjoyed fresh kolachi (Koh-LAH-chah), a popular sweet bread, as they listened to their parents speak with the baker in their native language.

A Czech bakery in Cedar Rapids around the turn of the century

Photo courtesy Chadima family

Fairfax residents Kelsey Sukovaty (left) and her sister Tamara Lynn Chadima, pose at the Miss Czech Slovak USA Pageant in 1995. Tamara was second runner-up in the pageant.

An athletic and patriotic society called a sokol (Sow-KHOL) began in 1874. Here, in the large gymnasium and assembly hall, Czech Iowans practiced and performed gymnastics and other exercises, a tradition brought with them from their homeland. Adults often joined drama groups that presented Czech plays. These reminders of home became traditions that continue today.

Remembering the past

After many years in America, some people started forgetting their Czech heritage. Adults wanted important customs, education, and language to be preserved for their children. Czechs across Iowa have organized festivals and museums to showcase their culture.

Today, Iowans may visit the Czech and Slovak Museum and Library or create their own Czech-styled art at a Czech heritage festival. Area kids attend summer school to learn more about Czech history, geography, and language.

Holly Upah, the 1995 Czech Princess and a Cedar Rapids resident, learned about her roots at the summer Czech school. Upah told *The Goldfinch* that visiting Czech Village is like visiting history.

"It helps me understand what life used to be like for immigrants," She said. "My life might be a lot different now, but my heritage is the same. I really feel like I belong here, too." ❖

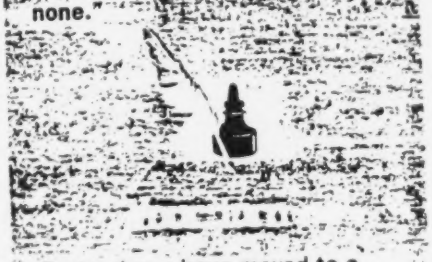
Writing Home

Some immigrants weren't as lucky as the Korab family. Instead of community, they found loneliness. Affordable land and freedom from persecution did not make up for the language barriers and lack of cultural activities many immigrants experienced.

Immigrants sometimes described feelings of loneliness in letters they wrote to relatives still living in Europe.

One settler wrote home about Christmas in his new home:

"I remember you, my dear fellow countrymen . . . how you feel during these special Christmas days, while I, farmer, celebrate Christmas in solitude and sadness in this spiritual desert here. We have plenty of meat, bread, eggs, and coffee but spiritual goods we have none."



Pretend you have moved to a foreign country. Write a letter to relatives in Iowa describing how you have tried to create a community in your new home.

A Community of Faith: Jews in Sioux City

by Kathleen M. Hays

courtesy Bobys family

Ten-year-old Nick Bobys is a member of the Jewish community in Sioux City.

When young Esther Klass arrived in Sioux City in 1910, she was dazzled by the furnishings in her new home. She did not have electricity in her Russian home and her mother had cooked in an open fireplace. Now she stared at the large, shiny stove. "Is that a piano?" she asked.

From the old country to the new

Esther's family was part of the flood of Jewish immigrants who entered the United States between 1885 and 1914. Most were very poor. Jews were not allowed to own land in eastern Europe and were forced to live in crowded areas of cities called ghettos.

When they arrived in America, many found homes among their fellow Jews in the eastern United States. Those who came to Iowa were attracted to cities like Davenport, Des Moines, and Sioux City where they set up businesses selling clothes, shoes, and food, and worked as teachers, doctors, and lawyers.

Building a community

The already established Jewish community helped Jewish newcomers. "When I came to Sioux City," Joe Rosenthal remembered in 1985, "there were two or three individuals who provided for all the new immigrants." Although Joe was only 13 in 1907, he was given a job making deliveries for a grocer. Others worked for Jewish blacksmiths, carpenters, and harnessmakers.

Jews coming to Iowa wanted to preserve their heritage. They organized social clubs, youth groups, women's societies, and political organizations.

The center of the Jewish community was the temple or synagogue, but not all Jews agreed on how to worship. The first Jewish immigrants to Iowa were mostly Germans who arrived before 1885. They organized a **congregation** in 1899. They wanted to fit in with other Americans, so they held services on Sunday morning instead of the traditional Friday night.

Later, Jewish immigrants who practiced Orthodox Judaism began arriving from Russia and eastern Europe. Their stricter religious beliefs didn't allow them to work on

congregation — members of a church, synagogue, or other place of worship

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Shabat — the Sabbath

Saturday or eat the same foods most Americans ate. They had little to do with other Iowans, including the earlier Jewish immigrants. Instead, they quickly established their own synagogues, building the first in 1894 and three more by 1910.

World War I (1914-1917) and a common concern for Jewish people in need finally drew the Jews of Sioux City together. In 1925, they formed a new congregation.

More changes

The years have brought about changes for the Jewish community in Sioux City. Congregations have gotten smaller and have joined together as old and young community members move away. Fewer than 600 Jews are now left of the 2,500 who once lived in Sioux City.

But Sioux City's Jewish community is still a good place to be a kid. Just ask 10-year-old Nick Bobys about his favorite holiday.

"Every Friday night," he says immediately. That's when he goes to the temple with his dad to celebrate **Shabat** (SHAH-bat) and **kibitz** (KIB-its).

"It's cool," Nick says. ❖

SHSI (Iowa City)

A view of Sioux City in the 1880s. During the late 1800s, there were about 3,000 Jewish people living in Iowa. By 1916, this number rose to 9,000.

Courtesy Jewish Federation, Sioux City

These kids are making decorations for Passover, a Jewish holiday.

❶ Name a community center in your town or city.

❷ Why is Nick Bobys' religious community important to him?

❸ The Jews in Sioux City are part of a worldwide community of faith. How large are some of the communities in your life?

Kibitz — visit with friends

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Left out

by Bridgett M. Williams

SHSI (Iowa City)

When people are left out of communities and denied their rights, they often gather together to work for change, like these protestors did during the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and 1970s.

Being left out is never fun. Yet sometimes, when people are excluded from a community due to age, gender, race, or political beliefs, they form their own groups to make exclusion less painful. These groups can also give people a strong collective voice to ask for changes.

The fight for suffrage

Because American women were excluded from voting in national elections until 1920, some Iowa women published pro-**suffrage** newspapers and organized Political Equality Clubs. Carrie Chapman Catt, a resident of Charles City, went door-to-door to convince her neighbors that women should have the right to vote.

Women eventually got the right to vote when the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution was passed by Congress in 1920. Despite the new law, African-American women were often excluded from the polls because of their race. The fight for equality was far from over.

Growing older, getting stronger

In Iowa's early history and into this century, most homes consisted of extended families where grandparents worked and played alongside their children and grandchildren. This is not the case today.

Elderly people often live in retirement communities and sometimes feel isolated from their families. Fortunately, senior citizen centers offer a wide range of activities to help older citizens ease their feelings of loneliness and isolation.

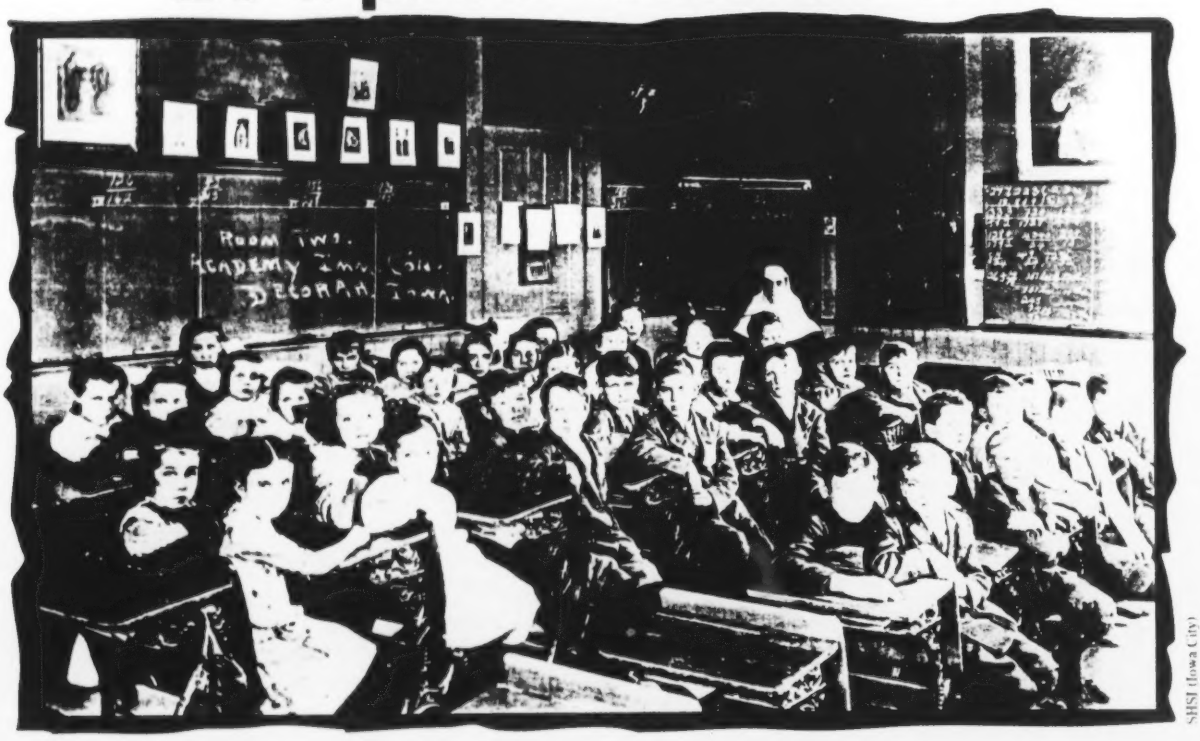
By coming together, Iowa's elderly populations made their concerns heard in the Iowa legislature. The Iowa Commission on Aging, first founded in the 1960s, coordinates state services for senior citizens. The Commission works closely with older Iowans and tries to address their concerns. The Commission's monthly publication, *Prime Time*, gives older Iowans a way to stay connected to each other. ❖

❶ Why are some people excluded from communities?

❷ Have you ever been left out of a club, sports team, or other community? How did it make you feel?

suffrage — the right to vote

Be a photo historian



SHSI (Iowa City)

You and your family might be members of many communities at once — an ethnic group, neighborhood, school, and club.

The students in the photograph above are members of several different communities, too. One of them was their school, the Immaculate Conception Academy in Decorah, which they attended around 1914. Study the photo carefully and pick out the clues to the other communities represented in the room. Then answer the questions to the right.

1. What are these kids doing?
2. How does the seating arrangement divide the classroom community?
3. What are the four communities identified on the blackboard?
4. Where is the teacher? Name a community she belongs to.
5. Do you belong to similar communities?

by Michelle Rubin

Attic Adventures II

by Amy Ruth

In the last issue of The Goldfinch, we left Peter Nelson reading the diary of Linka (Lyn-KAH) Halverson, a girl who lived in the 1850s.

Peter was still deep in thought when his grandmother creaked up the attic stairs and touched his shoulder. He jumped.

"That book must be pretty interesting," Grandma Nelson said, sitting down on a wooden trunk.

Peter nodded. "Look at all this cool stuff I found," he said, showing her Linka's diary and a photograph of two people in an old car. "I've been reading about the Halversons. They moved here from Norway."

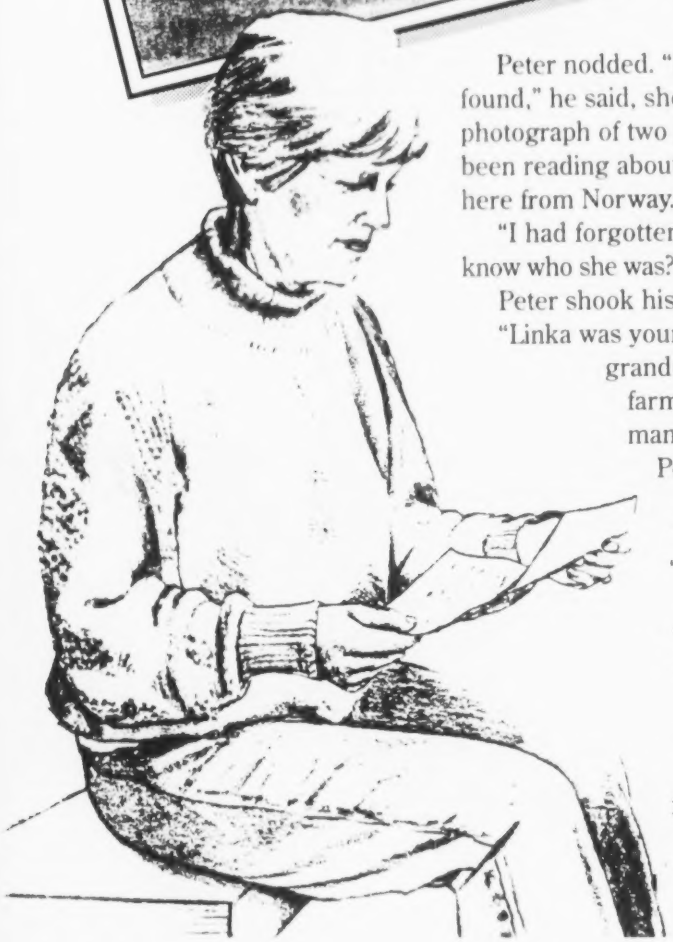
"I had forgotten about Linka's diary. Do you know who she was?" Grandma asked excitedly.

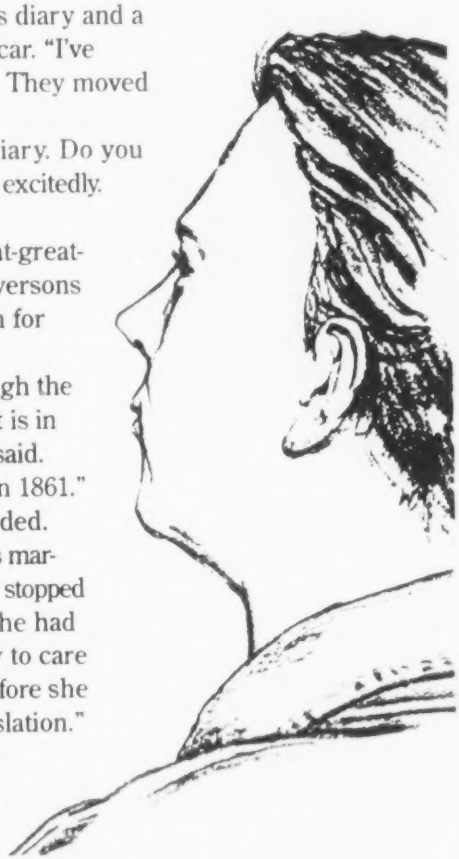
Peter shook his head.

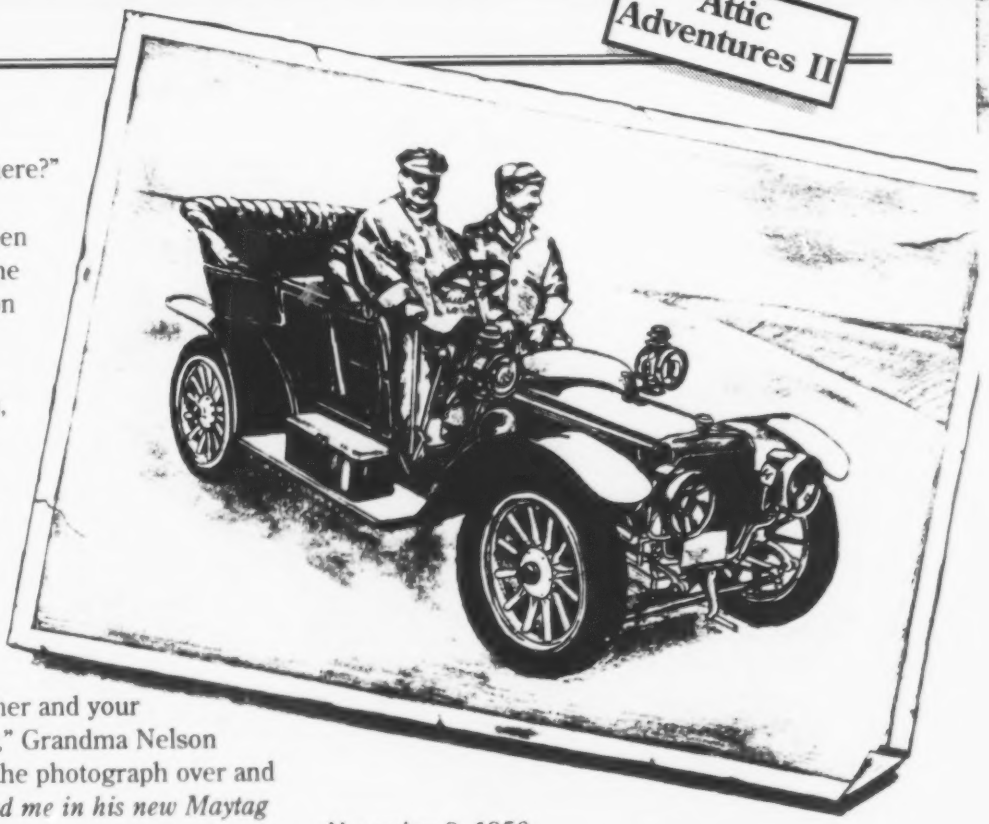
"Linka was your great-great-great-great-grandmother. The Halversons farmed near Decorah for many years."

Peter flipped through the diary. "Most of it is in Norwegian," he said. "The last date is in 1861."

Grandma nodded. "The year she was married. She probably stopped writing when she had her own family to care for. She died before she finished the translation."







"How did it end up here?" Peter asked.

"Oh, it must have been passed down through the family," Grandma Nelson said, looking around. "Many of these things belonged to my parents, and my grandparents before them."

Peter pointed to the photograph. "Who are these guys?"

"The boy on the left is Willy Erickson. He was Linka's grandson, my grandfather and your great-great-grandfather," Grandma Nelson answered. She turned the photograph over and read aloud, "*Sammy and me in his new Maytag Speedster, 1911.*"

"So who was the Sammy guy, grandma?" Peter asked. "And what's a Speedster?"

"There's only one way to answer that," Grandma Nelson replied. She stood up, opened the trunk, and pulled out a packet of envelopes. Sitting back down, she untied the bundle and leafed through it.

"Here it is," she said finally. "This is a letter Grandpa Willy wrote to me in 1950 when I was 15." She started to read and Peter settled back in his chair.

November 2, 1950

Dear Annie,

I promised to tell you the stories of my childhood. The first one I will tell happened in 1911. I was about 12 and lived in rural Woodbury County.

A fancy new invention, the automobile, came to our community that year. It was a Maytag Model E Touring Car that belonged to our neighbor, Mr. Samuel Jenkins. He drove it all the way from Waterloo where it was made. Most folks said old Samuel had more money than sense. But I didn't think so. If I had $1600 I

Art by Mary Moye-Rowley

would have bought a new car, too.

A few weeks later Sam Jr. had it out for a spin. He slowed down by our pasture. I ran to the fence, my heart pounding. I remember thinking what a good day this was for driving. It was a mid-October morning and the air smelled of crisp autumn leaves. I ran to the fence, hoping this would be my chance for a ride.

It was. Sammy lifted his goggles. "Jump in," he yelled. I hopped the fence and strolled around that glorious machine. It had a midnight blue body with yellow frame. I had never before seen anything so beautiful.

I scrambled in and Sammy handed me a long coat like his and helped me adjust a pair of goggles over my eyes. They pinched a little, but kept the dust out. We sped off, going about 15 miles an hour. I was so enjoying myself that I forgot about the time and the chores I had deserted.

We had three flat tires but still made it home before dark. My folks gave me a good talking to, but not before my sister begged them to take my picture in the Speedster. Then I was sent to my room without supper.

But I didn't care. For a ride in that car I would have gone without supper for a week. I thought the automobile was the best thing that ever happened to our community. I didn't realize it then, but this new-fangled invention had its downside, too.

Trouble was the car took business away from small communities. Rural families with cars didn't have to depend on the small-town grocery and other shops. They could drive to larger towns and cities looking for bargains. This drove many small-town shops out of business.

But, oh, how some communities grew! Rural folks suddenly had a whole new world to explore. The car took them further from their homes than they had ever been before. They could go to town more regularly and weren't so isolated from their friends and neighbors. Cars made it easier to sell farm products around the county. And the car did wonders for the medical community. Rural doctors could reach their patients faster than ever before and rural folks could travel easily to hospitals for the care they needed.

For a long time our country dirt roads were problems. They were great for horses and wagons, but cars had awful troubles. After it rained, cars often got stuck in the mud and a team of horses had to pull them out. Rural areas didn't get paved roads until the 1930s. Some still don't have them.

State Historical Society of Iowa (Iowa City)

SHSI (Iowa City)

Before tow trucks, travelers like Sammy and Willy relied on a team of horses to rescue them from muddy roads.

But the paved roads did come and a new roadside community flourished. Service stations repaired cars and filled their gas tanks. Roadside restaurants and motor inns served hungry and tired travelers. Things like drive-in movie theaters, drive-through restaurants and automatic car washes changed many communities. And we wouldn't need highway patrols, parking meters, or license plates if we didn't have cars.

Grandma Nelson folded the letter back into its envelope.

"You know, Grandma," Peter said quietly, "I can't remember my first car ride, or imagine what life in Council Bluffs would be like without cars." He shook his head in disbelief.

Grandma chuckled and picked up a 1953 television guide laying next to her. "You know what's changed our lives even more?" she asked. "If it was anything, it was television!"

Peter's eyes bulged. He didn't even want to imagine life without TV!

Stay tuned. In the next issue of *The Goldfinch*, you'll learn how television changed the life of an Iowa family in the 1950s.

Your turn

1. How did cars change rural communities?
2. Name three new products or services brought about by cars.
3. How would your community be different *without* cars?
4. What items is the Maytag company known for today?

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Iowa kids share their vision of life in Iowa in 1846

Iowans make up a geographical community — we share a common land area, government, and laws. Throughout Iowa history, our communities have changed as advances in technology and new ideas and attitudes have changed our lives.

In 1846, the year Iowa became the 29th state, most European-American families in Iowa lived on farms and worked long hours to survive. One hundred and fifty years later, most Iowans live in towns and cities. Fewer Iowans farm for a living. Those who do have improved machinery to help them with their crops and livestock.

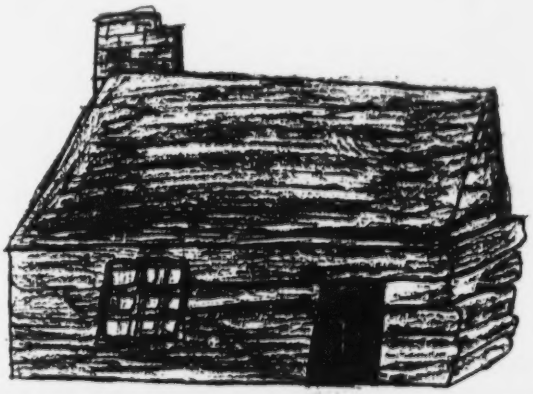
We asked our readers to share in the celebration of Iowa's 150th birthday by sending in their drawings, poems, and stories. Some *Goldfinch* readers shared their ideas of what life was like for Iowans in 1846, while another celebrates Iowa's birthday with her poem entitled *Iowa's Great Years*.

— Linzee Kull McCray

Iowa's Great Years

150!
150!
150, what a great number.
Iowa was a producer of lumber.
We talk,
But we don't mock!
Everything the farmers do,
The cows scream, "Moo! Moo!"
Our flag is very great.
'Cause we're a great state!
We all try to get along,
And we sing a great song.
We never get mental,
'Cause it's Sesquicentennial!

— Molly Powers, 11, Spirit Lake



In the mid-1800s the houses only had one room for the kitchen, sleeping, and eating. They had to live in log cabins in those days. It was fun when I slept in a log cabin. ***— Joshua Opp, 9, Cushing***

The farmer feeds and waters the animals. He only has a log cabin to sleep in. The farmer is carrying a yoke to put on the oxen's neck so that they can go into the field to plow.

— Jeremy Opp, 11, Cushing

In the olden days they didn't have electricity to have lights. They only had lanterns. They didn't have refrigerators. They used the ice house. They didn't have toilets. They went in outhouses. They didn't have heaters. They had woodstoves. The stores didn't have cash registers. They used pencil and paper. They didn't have globes. They had flat maps. They didn't have cars. They used horses and buggies. They didn't use machines for farming. They used horse-drawn plows.

— Elizabeth Powell, 8, Zearing

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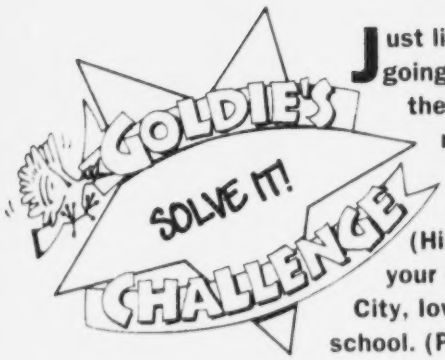
Community Puzzler



Just like communities across Iowa, the word "community" has a lot going on. Figure out just how much by finding separate words within the word. How many can you spot? (We found more than 30!) You may use the letters more than once to form each word. People's names, like "Tim," don't count. Send your list of words to *The Goldfinch* by January 15, 1996, and we'll send you a free prize. (Hint: The words can be short, like "it" or long like "commit.") Send your list to: Community Puzzler, *The Goldfinch*, 402 Iowa Ave., Iowa City, Iowa 52240. Please include your name, age, address, and grade in school. (P.S. Good luck!)

Answers

How to build a town (page 7)

(1) Three schools, three cemeteries, and two churches (2) Old North School because it's closest to their homes (3) Haydens, Cases, Harveys, Summers, Carters, Clares, Lambs, and Penichs (4) Curtis and Armour families (5) Big Rock was a landmark (6) Less water and not near a town center (7) Men were considered heads of households (8) You would want to live near people, water, and a town center

News from Icaria (page 16)

(1) A, B, D (2) C, D (3) E (4) F (5) G, F (6) H, I

History mystery (back cover)

This year is the 75th anniversary of the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution which gave all American women the right to vote. The ammendment was passed by the United States Congress on August 26, 1920. Read more about the woman suffrage community on page 22.

What Next?

Read more about communities in Iowa history! Look for the following issues of *The Goldfinch* at your school or public library:

"Des Moines," November 1988

"The Family Farm," February 1990

"Lake Life," Summer 1993

"African-American Iowans," Summer 1995

These and other issues of *The Goldfinch* may also be purchased from the State Historical Society of Iowa. For more information write to Publication Sales, 402 Iowa Ave., Iowa City, Iowa 52240, or call 319-335-3916.

The Roost

COMMUNITY...
DICTIONARY
A GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS WHO SHARE COMMON INTERESTS.
OR VALUES.
OR BELIEFS.
OR TRAITS!
OR CULTURE!
OR GEOGRAPHY!!
OR ETHNICITY!!
OR POLITICS!!!
OR OCCUPATIONS!!!
OR CLASS!!!!
OR FAMILY!!!!
OR FRIENDSHIP!!!!!
OR... YEAH, THAT'S IT! FRIENDSHIP.
JERRY BROWN

History Mystery

Iowa history is full of communities. You'll learn about many of them in this issue of ***The Goldfinch.***

The button to the left represents a community that formed across Iowa and the country. Community members worked together to achieve a common goal. Suffragettes, as they were called in the late 1800s and early 1900s, wanted American women to have the right to vote. They became members of the woman suffrage community and sponsored rallies, demonstrations, and speeches to convince lawmakers that women should have the right to vote.

This year, the woman suffrage community is celebrating a very special anniversary. What is it? (Turn to page 30 for the answer.)

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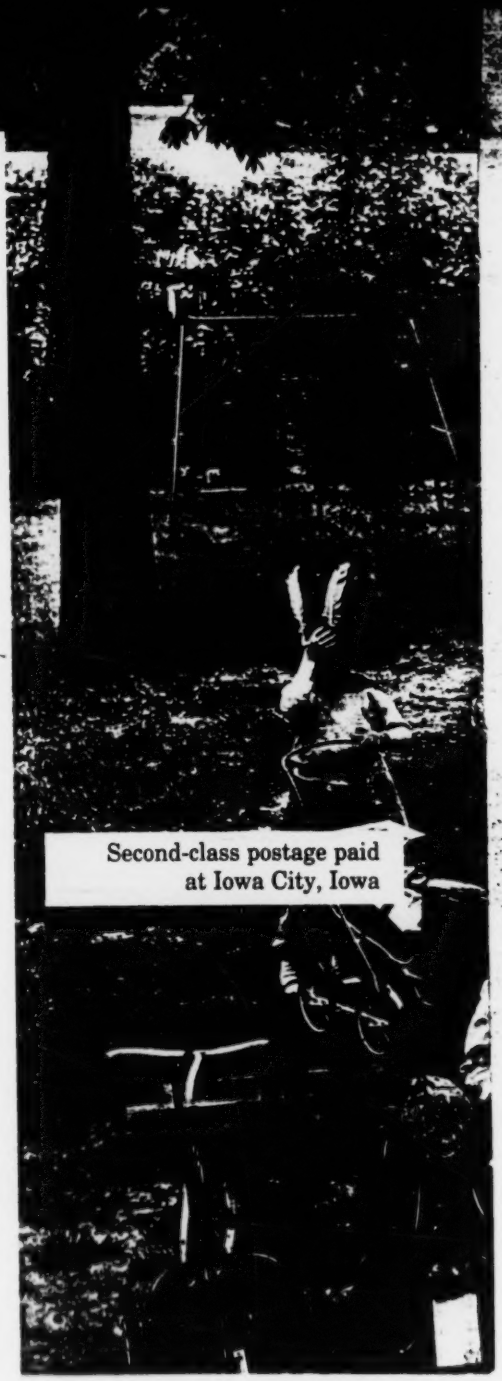

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